

Memorandum of Interview of Edward E. Redditt, formerly of the Memphis Police Department, now of the Office of Community Development, Memphis, Tennessee, on July 8, 1976

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The interview of former officer Redditt was conducted by Messrs. Walker and Folsom of the task force. He was questioned primarily about why he was at fire station No. 2 on April 3-4

Redditt said he had been working in the Intelligence Unit of the M.P.D. since the start of the strike. He had been reassigned from the Community Relations Division. Redditt described his duty as guarding Dr. King every time King was in Memphis.

On April 3 the King delegation told Redditt and others from the police that they did not want a protective detail. Nevertheless the police went to the airport to meet King using a "cruiser" (i.e. an unmarked car) and escorted him to the Lorraine Motel. There the King party insisted the police leave. They did not want a guard with Dr. King. The assigned police went back to the perimeter, the edge of the motel grounds. After more protests, the police were moved out of sight which meant the firehouse. Redditt and Richmond were assigned to the firehouse.

On April 4 at about 5:00 p.m. Redditt was ordered by his commanding officer to report to the police station. There Redditt was told, in the presence of a representative from Senator Eastland's office, that word had been received that a contract had been put out on him, Redditt. Redditt was first ordered to go with his family to a motel in Mississippi. He objected he had a sick mother-in-law who could not be moved; he was then directed to go home and stay

there. Sitting in the squad car in front of his home, he heard the news of King's assassination at about 6:05.

Redditt recalled that while he was still at the fire station he saw eight or nine members of the "Invaders" leave suddenly in a group at about 4:15 p.m. He doesn't know why.

King's delegation consisted of Rev. Kyles, Rev. Lawson and others locally. Rev. Abernathy, Jesse Jackson and Rev. Bevel were not there.

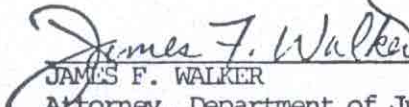
At the conclusion of the interview, Redditt volunteered that he didn't believe Ray pulled the trigger or had anything to do with it. He said he thought the one-time firearms instructor for the police department, a Capt. Clark, a martinet and a hater of Negroes, could have done it. Capt. Clark sort of dropped out of sight just after the King assassination. That's all he knew.

Thereafter, Redditt, Mr. Walker and Mr. Folsom went to the office of the clerk of the Shelby County Criminal Court, and after getting a court order to supplement the order of July 7 which covered only Walker and Folsom, viewed a photograph taken April 4 at the entrance of Canipe's Amusement Co., 424 So. Main St., Memphis, Tennessee. Mr. Redditt said the officer in the picture was Louis McKay.



Memorandum of Reinterview of Edward E. Redditt

On September 28, 1976, I telephoned Edward E. Redditt at his place of employment (b)(7)(C) and asked him whether he knew anything about the detail of firemen Norvell Wallace and Floyd Newsum from fire station no. 2. Redditt stated that he had no personal knowledge of the details. Moreover, he did not request that they be detailed because of the surveillance detail at the fire station nor does he have knowledge of any other police officer making such a request.

  
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JAMES F. WALKER  
Attorney, Department of Justice

Addendum: Redditt also stated that the author of the book: "An American Death" gave a pretty accurate account of his activities on the surveillance detail at the fire station.